

# Memorandum

To: Jay Rood  
From: Sandy Fischer  
CC: Jeff Bouma, Richard Hartlage, Pliney Keep  
Date: 9/14/2015  
Re: Public Meeting for Sensory Garden at Woodland Park Zoo (9/10/2015)

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## **Meeting Goals and Attendance**

The purpose of the public meeting was to present the Schematic Design for the Sensory Garden at the Woodland Park Zoo. The meeting was attended by 25 people. A sign in sheet is available from the City's Project Manager Jay Rood. The City was responsible for public notification. In attendance were interpreters using signing and visual translation. Tactile maps were provided and a powerpoint and plotted large scale materials were presented. The full transcript may be available from the City.

## **Presentation and Comments**

Jay introduced the project, Working Group and consultants and discussed the project history, timeline, budget and construction schedule.

Sandy Fischer and Richard Hartlage presented the Site Context, Site Analysis, and Schematic Garden Design and discussed the features in the Woodland and Meadow gardens. Attendees were asked to discuss the plan and indicate preferences on features.

## **Comments (in order received and discussed)**

Concern that the pavement in the Rose garden is not accessible and that the use of stabilized crushed stone in the Garden may be a concern. Some expressed a preference for concrete.

Access to the Rose Garden is difficult from transit and for pedestrians.

Concern expressed about maintenance and sustainability of plan. Jay indicated it would not be built if funds for maintenance were not committed.



Request that irrigation be reclaimed water- Pliney explained current zoo policy and water source. The zoo may move to reclaimed water in future but this project's water source will be an extension of the existing system in the Rose Garden.

Concern that a resting space next to the Cathedral of Melodies may not be compatible. Sandy explained the more active uses will be in the meadow and more passive in the woodland. Therefore, the mound may be an active element versus a resting plane.

There needs to be some uniformity and a clear theme or story to the project. It was explained that will be accomplished through materials, plants and circulation.

Flexible seating is not recommended for blind. Flexible elements such as things that can be manipulated in a table exist now and are a good feature. The ability to stack rocks in water was an idea from one of the attendees.

It was noted that active water play and playground features are not a feature in this park. The place will be playful but not a playground.

Wayfinding in a complex environment is important and challenging. Need to find right balance between a place that is pleasurable and cognitively challenging. It would be acceptable to design for people to discover by making multiple visits.

Fixed elements present fewer orientation challenges.

Levels of challenges are good as they offer opportunities for discovery and adventure.

Sculpted hedge, if too tall may not allow view in. There are concerns about homelessness, drug use affecting visitors' safety.

CPTED-Crime prevention through environmental design. The plan will be reviewed for compliance with CPTED principals. It was noted that some want more routes out and some want the garden contained so that people will feel safer letting the visitors they are escorting roam more freely without the risk of leaving the garden.

Will the Garden be in conflict with activities in the Rose garden such as weddings? Pliney explained they can co-exist. The Rose garden is not closed when weddings occur. The garden and the place where weddings occur are separate enough.

People liked the contrasting character of the two gardens and preferred some of each be constructed.

The dark hedge will provide a nice contrast to the colorful plantings in front of it.

The entire garden should be tactile and if the tactile terrace moves to Phase 2, the designers should incorporate tactile feature into phase 1.

The idea of a shoreline was well received. The benches should not protect into it.



Materials changes on paving can also help with orientation.

Some are disappointed trees will be removed. Pliney commented that trees removed will be replaced 2 for 1. He also noted that 50% of the zoo has a tree canopy.

Suggestion that a digital model be built to help people evaluate the plan before it is built.

It was noted that people with autism may find the meadow garden too stimulating. Separating the noisy active places from quiet restful places is a good idea.

Wind chimes could be navigating elements.

Small tactile water feature is a good idea.

More than one person had concern about the Drum Deck.

Carefully consider the density of elements of the sensory elements. Keep it simple.

At least one person liked it all.

Swings a good idea.

Sculptural poles with Braille could be good navigating elements.

The garden is hidden and community needs to be made aware of it.

The improvements may cause more people to visit. 5' walks may not be wide enough.